

*includes miyake, aiko*

Project I.D. No.22

NAME: Morioka, Teruko DATE OF BIRTH: 1902 PLACE OF BIRTH: Kochi  
Age: 69 Sex: F Marital Status:      Education:     

PRE-WAR:

Date of arrival in U.S.: 4/1923 Age: 21 M.S. M Port of entry: San Fran.  
Occupation/s: 1. Farmer/Cook 2. Housewife 3.       
Place of residence: 1. Stockton, Ca. 2. Marysville, Ca. 3. East Sacramento  
Religious affiliation:       
Community organizations/activities:     

EVACUATION:

Name of assembly center:       
Name of relocation center:       
Dispensation of property:      Names of bank/s:       
Jobs held in camp: 1.      2.       
Jobs held outside of camp:       
Left camp to go to:     

POST-WAR:

Date returned to West Coast:       
Address/es: 1.      2.       
3.       
Religious affiliation: Christian Church  
Activities: 1.      2.      3.       
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: Deceased

Name of interviewer: Helen Akune/E. Hironaka Date: Fall 1970 Place: Sacramento, Ca.

*Translator: A. Tokuno*



Introview with Mrs. Teruko Morioka and Mrs. Aiko Miyake

Mrs. Morioka has passed away since then. At the time of introview she was 69 years old.

Introview took place sometime in fall, 1970.

Interviewers: Mrs. Helen Akune  
Mrs. Elaine Hironaka

Translated by Mrs. Asako Tokuno  
Completed on Sep 20, 1973.



Q: What is your name?

MRS. MORIOKA: It is Teruko Morioka. I was born in Kochi-ken, Takaohamachi, on the first day of the year 22; I was married...an arranged marriage, you know...after that, in April of the ( ) year...  
... let me see, I forget the day, but the early part of April I debarked in San Francisco...and then...

Q: Did you stop in Hawaii?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, yes, we stopped in Hawaii.

Q: How many days did it take?

MRS. MORIOKA: Let me see, it took about 16 days, I think. In those days the boats took so long....

Q: From Japan to Hawaii?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, to San Francisco. Let me see, how long did it take from Hawaii, I wonder...

MRS. MIYAKE : I didn't stop in Hawaii. I went to Seattle.

MRS. MORIOKA: Oh, I see. To Hawaii, let me see...didn't it take about nine days; anyway it seemed like 16 days altogether....but I was so sea-sick you see, I thought no matter what happened I'd never want to ride on a boat again, that's how sick I got!

Q: Did you look forward to coming to America?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, I wanted to come to America. I wanted to come so much!  
I yearned to come to America and so I did! Then, when I did come, it was so different from the way I imagined it would be when I was still in Japan. When I was about to arrive,



my husband said to me, "All the young people are saying "America, America" and look forward to coming, but there is a saying that "until you have climbed Mt. Fujii, you haven't seen anything..." so, don't be disappointed, he had warned me...and sure enough, when I got here, it was just exactly as he had said; really now, after you've been in Japan and you come over here, it was so desolate!... Our friends were few and all of us being Japanese and not understanding English, it was so difficult and you became homesick, you know... and I wondered why I had come to such a place and I was so unhappy!

Q. (Where did you settle?)

MRS. MORIOKA: Uh, Stockton, at first. We were in Stockton for about a year....and then, we went to Marysville and in Marysville, we did ( ) for two or three years, you see, and after that we came to East Sacramento and there, until the ( ), we had a grocery.

Nowadays, most of the Nisei marry for love, neh, but in our day, ours were all arranged marriages or picture-bride marriages, you see. Even persons in Japan ( ). Contact among the young people wasn't permitted; therefore, the majority of Japanese of my age-group all of them were arranged marriages. Mine was one of them, so you see, we didn't know how to make a living and really, when there's an



age difference of over ten years....you know they say..."ten years make an epoch"...there's a difference in (       ) and you don't understand the ways of life and then to come to this country and there were so many things to worry about, you know...Any way, there were times when I thought, if only there were no children, (       ); there were even times like that, and I worked so hard and I.....really! There was a time I cried and prayed to God to please keep my soul on a righteous path and then since we lived in the country where it's spacious, the children had a dog that had puppies and they were always hungry and I didn't know about dog food...I couldn't understand English, neither of us could...so, I would boil the dog's milk and put it over some rice and give it to the puppies and they loved it! Then, the puppies got big enough to waddle around and while they all gathered around the food in this big pan with soggy rice and milk, I noticed the mother dog sitting back in the corner watching her pups and wondering what they were eating and at that time I was so impressed! Ma-a- I thought, really, even a mother dog knows such love for her children and here I was, born a human being, (=       ) honestly, I was so disgusted with myself that I decided then that I must do my best for the children's sake...for the children's welfare...that's the way I thought at that time.



So, then, now this year will mark our 47th anniversary since I was married...and there have been sad times, miserable times, but really ( ) so then, we've had a relatively happy life and if it hadn't been for ( ) we might not have managed and I'm feeling grateful.

Q: How old were you when you were married?

MRS. MORIOKA: 21 years old. I was exactly 21. It was 47 years ago.

Q. ( )

MRS. MORIOKA: 21st year.... We were married on New Year's Day and then around the end of March we left Kobe and arrived in April ..6th or 7th I think it was. There was an Immigration Office we went thru' ... ( ) and that was 3 or 4 days...can't remember exactly, it's so long ago!

Q: ( )

Q: Let's begin with your name first....

MRS. MIYAKE: I'm Miyake, Aiko. In Japan, I'm from Okayama -ken, Taka-machi. ( )

In the 21st year, January 1st we were married and....

Everyone in Japan said, "Don't go to America. Wouldn't it be better to find something to do here in Japan and (

) they all said one thing or another to discourage us from coming to America. Miyake said there wasn't anything special to do that he liked in Japan and I ( )



and my husband said it would be better to go to America, so I thought I'd better come with him so I came even if I didn't really want to come to America, I didn't want to stay behind in Japan.....since he insisted, so I came with him in July. When we left Yokohama it was exactly the 4th of July.....fireworks were on display and my husband informed me that that was for America's Independence Day. Then, when we got to Seattle and from there we went to Portland. Then, in Portland he worked in a store; then since they needed workers on the railroad further inland in the mountains and asked us if we wouldn't come, they took us away in to the mountain country. The foreman was Japanese and since we were a married couple, they pulled along a house for us and let's see, how many years was it we stayed now?

Q: Were they all Japanese?

MRS. MIYAKE : Yes, Japanese. The cook was from Kumamoto and now and then he'd say something in the Kumamoto dialect that we couldn't understand. And, there was this "meat-house", I wondered what in the world it was....a small, let's see, 16 x 9 or 16 square or so..; it was in the hills among the trees in a grove, this little house, built to hang the meat where it was cool and it wouldn't spoil, you see. Really, the trains passing every now and then was all we ever saw....that was all there was for us Japanese and it was a very lonesome feeling. So at one point



I, just myself, longed very much to go back to Japan.

I was concerned especially about the children not hearing the Japanese language, so if the children grew up in America, as Japanese...( ) my Japanese instincts were still very strong...( ).

MRS. MORIOKA: ..because there was prejudice....

MRS. MIYAKE: Not prejudice. I didn't feel or think there was any prejudice or experience any as such...

Q : Mrs. Miyake, did you teach the children here or start a Japanese School or teach any children here?

MRS. MIYAKE : No, I have never taught.

MRS. MORIOKA: Mrs. Takatsuki started a Japanese School....kindergarten...

MRS. MIYAKE: I've never taught in America. When the children were smaller I taught them at home, you know.

Q: Do you have children?

MRS. MIYAKE: Yes

Q: How many?

MRS. MIYAKE: Three. When the eldest was one and I was pregnant, I returned to Japan and then, in 1924, before a law was passed that Japanese could not come to America, I came back. At that time I returned. But then, when I was in Japan, I had planned to stay until, as we all dreamed in those old days, years ago, my husband made his fortune and would return to Japan...and to bring up the children at my parent's home. However, I was also thinking



how difficult it would be to bring up children without my husband. Whenever, my brother would visit, the children would climb onto his lap right away, substituting him for their father and just as I was thinking..."this is not good..", I received a letter asking if I wouldn't come back to America. So, for the children's sake...; at first, I went back to Japan thinking it was better for their welfare, but then, I decided it was more important for them to be brought up by both parents and so I came back and they started grammar school. I would receive inquiries from Japan about sending the children to school in Japan, but at that point, I was convinced it was important to bring one's children up by one's own hand and not leave the job to someone else...

Q. Was there a depression in Japan?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, when we came there wasn't that much of a depression because it was during the Taisho period. A year later there was a tragedy - ( ) in the Tokyo Kanto Area. It wasn't that much of a depression. But it wasn't anything like it is now...it seems their economy is really booming!

Q: ( )

MRS. MORIOKA: No, it wasn't for that reason. It's because when the young people in Japan hear about America, they get carried away!.. They hear about all the dollars and they think that's the place to go..America..where everybody is rich, the Japanese



are thinking. Therefore, when we go back to Japan and take you know, just a small gift...they seem to think..."what kind of gift is that to bring back from America"...our relatives are thinking..."Is that all they brought?" So, America is the hope of all the young people where all the wealth is so they want to come so badly with all their hopes and dreams. And then when they get here and it's not really the way they thought it would be. Now, the Nisei are really well-off, to my way of thinking...; they have a beautiful education and the Issei.. well, among us that is to say, there were some who were pretty well educated, but for the most part, they had to immigrate and with little education and ended up in the country doing farm or domestic work...there was no choice for them, neh. Therefore, the Nisei grew up (in an orderly manner) because they grew up in the country where it was spacious and there was no chance to get into trouble and the parents had many hardships working hard and the children had the conscience to feel they should help out even if a little, so they felt a (        ), so they didn't get bad....that's the way I feel anyway. The Sansei, now, are getting too much attention (getting spoiled) in my opinion. The parents are well-educated, they live in a beautiful home, they're given everything they want...because of this their standard of living is too ( selfish ).



The Issei that have the education of the Nisei are very few. Everybody went to grammar school. The men went as far as what they call a common school (Jinjyo Gōtō) in our day....similar to the Junior High Schools here, I guess it's called....that's as far as they were able to go...like my husband. That is the way it was, and the women were better educated than the men sometimes....the wives, that is...so that caused some friction, but for the sake of the children, the Issei women, 90% of them....the Issei who became mothers thought of the well-being of their children, that they should become successful, outstanding citizens - that was foremost in all their minds.

Q: Were all of the passengers on the boats from Japan, Japanese?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, mostly Japanese....About the time we came, picture-bride marriages had been outlawed, so they had to go fetch the wives so there were scads of couples on board coming here together!  
(Laughter)

Q: So, when you disembarked at San Francisco, did all of you who came together go together to one place? Or did you separate?

MRS. MORIOKA: Once we got to San Francisco, we all disbanded and went where our husbands ( ) and dispersed to Fresno or Stockton... or wherever....

Q: Were there communities of Japanese, like in Fresno or Stockton?  
Is that where you went?



MRS. MORIOKA: Oh, yes, indeed...there were gatherings of Japanese; not like it is today. Like Marysville, for instance, Stockton, and Sacramento...(kaji-en) flourished, and there were a great number of Japanese laborers and....

Q: But it was lonesome even if you were here together, you missed Japan I suppose?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes.....

Q: Was there some interesting or funny experience that you can remember...because of the difference in the American and Japanese cultures? Do you have any recollection?

MRS. MORIOKA: Let me see....

Q: Did you wear Japanese clothes? Did you come here in Japanese dress?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, we came in kimonos. But once we got here we couldn't wear kimonos; after all, we couldn't wear foreign clothes and were careful not to wear kimonos and wore dresses and suits and not Japanese clothing. So you know, my feet hurt so much (laughter). When we were going to school, even to jyogakko, they wear shoes now...but we wore wooden clogs (geta) and in our prefecture, the boys wore shoes to Normal School, but for everyday, for sewing school, we wore ordinary red-thonged geta with our uniforms, so we'd never worn shoes! So then, they were those pointed-toed shoes and my feet hurt and hurt (laughter) and I couldn't go anywhere! I couldn't even walk....that was one of my biggest



problems! (laughter)

Q: How about the beds?

MRS. MORIOKA: What, bed? Oh, I liked the beds. They felt comfortable.... they felt good. My aching feet were my downfall (laughter) I couldn't walk. In a geta or slippers, your feet could spread out, but in shoes, my poor toes were squeezed together and they hurt! (Laughter)

Q: Miyake-san, can you recall something?

MRS. MIYAKE : Sô-desu-ne....the second time I came, we came to Sacramento. At that time, the landlord lived upstairs and he was Portugese. And so to converse...(laughter)...in my broken English....we couldn't communicate. 'Yes' and 'No' are opposite in meaning you see. When he'd ask, "Is this yours?" (Does this belong to you?) and since it wasn't mine, I'd say, "Ee-yeh, is it yours?" (

).

MRS. MORIOKA: That you know is often mistaken. In Japanese, we say "hai, (yes), that is so" to everything. And so, therefore, in this country, if one should ask "Is so and so at home?" You're supposed to say, "no". In Japanese, "yes, that is so," is what we'd answer....and so with that in mind, we say "yes". (Laughter)....and then, they'll say "Wassamatta? you just said they're not at home" and then you say "yes" again they'd



complain. At times like that we couldn't understand and we'd have a misunderstanding (laughter). In that respect, there was a difference.

Q: Hakujin, did they treat you well when you first came?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, they were very good to us. After all, Americans, how do you say, lived in a spacious country and they were big-hearted, so we were thankful, as compared to Japanese who were limited to small islands and their thinking was small. (Shima-gōri-kenjō) When they get ahead a little they tend to be boastful (countries have a national trait, you know...) and Americans living in a spacious land, as a whole, they tend to think big, so I was impressed.

Q: Before you came from Japan, did you have work first or did you find work after you got here?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, my husband was continuously in farm work you see.

Q: And did he come here because of that or did he come because they offered him work?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, that wasn't the way it was....that is, if you have a farm, one has to help out with the work. So he had work..and you couldn't do all the farm work alone. There were Filipino and Mexican hired-hands to cook for and feed; care of the children; there were no machines like today. We had to use wash-tubs and scrub-boards and we really worked! Ironed, too and then, when there was spare time, we'd pull weeds to help out even a



little on the ranch as it cost so much to hire workers. And then, in 1929 to 1930, during Hoover's administration (he's famous for the depression period)...the depression came along and we really suffered during that time. I don't know about the city people...but on the ranch, the produce we raised wouldn't sell, nothing would. We hired workers, paid out money, bought fertilizer, all the expenses and sometimes we'd even have to ~~disc~~ the vegetables under. Therefore, we really suffered!

Q: How did you manage in times like that?

MRS. MORIOKA: Sō, neh, there's an old saying "if you persist, you'll overcome..." Somehow or other, we did eat, because we lived on a farm we had things to eat. But we were in a bind...the banks collapsed you know...moratorium, or something like that...

MRS. MIYAKE: Yes, ~~Sakata~~-san talked about those times like that too. But I was ( ) working all along, so I didn't feel the Depression at all. My work was steady, but I used to hear about people in Florin that they didn't have anything to eat...raiding garbage cans...killing cats and various stories such as that, but I myself, during the depression even coming from Japan, I never had to work....I never experienced a single hardship. Well, even going to sewing school was because when I went back to Japan after a year, my mother scolded me unmercifully for not even learning how



to sew. "You went to America and what did you do? You didn't even learn to sew one stitch!" I really got scolded! The neighbors would come and ask me to show them how to sew clothes for their children and I'd have to say I couldn't and they wouldn't believe me. "How can you say that?", they'd say. I had a new sewing machine sent to me, a beautiful one when I returned to Japan. It came in a big box...like to a rich man's...but I couldn't sew! I was scolded, so when I returned the second time to America, I went to night school to learn English and to sewing school, so I would be able to teach everyone when I again went back to Japan. And I sewed some at home during the Depression and didn't realize how difficult jobs were to find because I worked steadily and didn't really suffer. On the other hand, (laughter) I didn't live a life of ease. All the time others said how they suffered then and with three children, you can't say I really had to suffer for their sake either....

MRS. MORIOKA: You were really fortunate! Really....

MRS. MIYAKE: Fortunate or not...at any rate, others talk about suffering but I honestly didn't experience any at all....

MRS. MORIOKA: There are those who were lucky like Mrs. Miyake...and then there were those that really suffered! There was a time when the Japanese even had to go searching for food...like in Florin...Mr. Ichigaya who had a grocery store, they wouldn't even lend him money for foodstuffs...a time when it was really pitiful!

Q: Obasan, where were you living during the Depression? Were you in Stockton?

MRS. MORIOKA: What's that? During the depression? Oh, during the depression



we were in Sacramento. Yes, farming in Sacramento....

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Q: And you hired workers?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes

Q: And you did all the cooking, Obasan?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes (laughter and muffled comment)

Q: Oh, that must have been a lot of work!

MRS. MORIOKA: There weren't many, 2 or 3, but we fed them.

Q: Were they Japanese?

MRS. MORIOKA: No....we hired Japanese too...but when it was difficult to hire Japanese, we'd have Filipinos and Mexicans would come too, but they'd eat Japanese cooking. Yes, Japanese food they'd eat. Even if they wanted something else, I couldn't cook it - western food and such, so I'd make Japanese food. Rice and mostly I'd make stews and curries and things like that and have them eat that.

Q: Your conversation was in English?

MRS. MORIOKA: Hal (laughter) Yes, English (much laughter)..that is to say, English? The others....somehow or other, they under-



stood Japanese. Anyway, the Filipinos would use broken-Japanese and they'd talk and they understood Japanese better than ( ).

Q: ( )

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, there were some who came to study, but not as many as there are now.

MRS. MIYAKE: They were mostly immigrants.

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, mostly immigrants. Now, there are many students. But at that time, there weren't many that came here to study.

Q: They must have gone to Europe in those days.

MRS. MORIOKA: That's right. To Europe. Yes, not many came to America to study.

Q: (..... Some must have gone to Argentine and to South America.

MRS. MORIOKA: They limited the numbers that could come to America. So many of them went to South America....after we came here, even among my relatives. I have one now who is in Sao Paulo, Brazil...and has been very successful there.

Q: Oh, it got so you couldn't come into America?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, you couldn't get in, so they went that way. One family pulled up stakes altogether from Japan and went there.

Q: (..... some people went to Canada?)

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, (I think Canada was more lenient). I think in America before the war, there was such discrimination against Japan-



ese, you know.

MRS. MIYAKE: There was something else. In the 24th year, the Japanese Envoy (Taishi) proclaimed that because of the Immigration ban, no more Japanese could come to America. Until then, anyone could come. But after 1924, when was that now?...June, or so....the people who were already here were allowed to stay and persons with American citizenship in Japan could return here, but the ordinary person wasn't allowed to come here. And then, after the war ( ), was changed; until then, new immigrants could not come, except for the kibbei-nisei. But that's all and no others could come, it developed.

Q: (Do you still feel the urge to go back to Japan? )

MRS. MORIOKA: After all, after you've been here so long, America is nice. But, at first when there was so much discrimination, we wanted to hurry and make our fortune and go back....but things have changed now, so...

MRS. MIYAKE: Were you discriminated against? Actually experienced prejudice, you, yourself?

MRS. MORIOKA: Uh, I...let me see....There was a time, like being called a Jap. There was a time...

MRS. MIYAKE: If discrimination existed, there were no outward manifestations directed that we actually felt. If you had a business or a farm, depending on what area you were in, there might have been some discrimination in different forms...



MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, that is so....

Q. (

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MRS. MORIOKA: The fellow we leased our ranch from..the official, neh, was very kind and very good to us and the hakujin neighbors were good to us and we thought Americans certainly are generous; oh, yes, yes. However, among them every now and then, the people who aren't too well-educated discriminate more. People who are more educated, on an individual basis treated us well on the whole.

Q: There were more Chinese working on the railroads...weren't there?

MRS. MORIOKA: The Chinese?

Q: The Chinese, or were there some Japanese?

MRS. MORIOKA: The Japanese too worked on the railroads, years ago it seems..

MRS. MIYAKE: There were more Chinese workers earlier tho'. Recently, they celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Railroad and at that time, the Sacramento Bee reported there were many Chinese railroad workers then. Japanese worked on railroads, too. My husband did, and Mr. Takatsuki did too at one time in Oregon for a while.

MRS. MORIOKA: My husband told me he worked on the railroads when he first came here also.

Q: Do you have grandchildren?

MRS. MIYAKE: (

)

I write a letter or send something and write in my broken



English and she says, "Oh, Grand'ma can write in Japanese and English both!". She's only seven years old, but she says she can write only in English. "Grand'ma knows both," she says. (laughter). But really, if you can't understand each other, you miss a lot of the closeness.

MRS. MORIOKA: (There's no closeness). (pause) When you are grandmothers, you will be able to understand your grandchild, so you'll be able to tell them about your childhood and things. But as for us, even if we wanted to tell them, we can't even begin to start constructing sentences, and since we can't really, I guess it's the same for all of us Issei.

It's true; there's no way to communicate with our grandchildren.

Q. (Comment: It's partly our fault. We don't make our children attend Japanese school or teach them...and they don't want to go. So that's why it's small wonder.)

MRS. MORIOKA: It's such a complicated language, Japanese.

Q: Yes, it's much more difficult than English.

Q: Did you have any recollection about your boat trip coming over here? Any stories about your trip?

MRS. MORIOKA: Let me see. On board, there wasn't anything special. There were movies and a kind of talent show the "boy-sans" put on for us - like a shibai - so we wouldn't be bored. But, nonetheless, I was so seasick, I was really miserable (laugh)



...really miserable (more laughter). It isn't like it is now. The food was so bad and I couldn't eat anything, so when we landed in San Francisco, my husband bought some doughnuts and oranges. I didn't know what they were! I gave some to my friend and they were so delicious and we asked what they were called and I remember he said they were "do-natsu" and I told my friend. We couldn't eat anything on the ship and we were sick, so those doughnuts were so delicious. I'll never forget how delicious those doughnuts tasted! (Laughter)...Oh, they were delicious!

Q: ( )

MRS. MIYAKE: I have a "perplexing temperament...my temperament doesn't seem to fluctuate much, but I can't remember being overly happy, or very complaining either. For my birthday, they'd ask what I want and I wouldn't know -- I wouldn't want anything in particular. So if I didn't get anything, I wouldn't miss it. There's nothing I feel that I just have to have I don't know if it's good or bad, but that's the way I am... I'm not happy-happy or sad-sad.

MRS. MORIOKA: Me, when the ship stopped in Hawai, we'd been sailing so long and were so tired, when we finally went ashore and saw these beautiful flowers blooming, what a beautiful place - like Paradise - Honolulu was I thought. And we took a bath and ate some sushi and osashimi and delicious food; all the



things I liked and I was so happy and I thought then I'd love to live in such a lovely place with all these flowers. Who wants to go to America, I thought. Hawaii's a great place, I thought. (laughter). If you're traveling for a long time on ship it feels so good to get on land even for a while.

MRS. MIYAKE: You stopped in Hawaii?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, in Hawaii.

MRS. MIYAKE: Oh, is that so?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, we stopped in Hawaii. It was March, the end of March, but the flowers were in full bloom. Oh, what a lovely place it was, I thought and I said, "I'd love to stay in a place like this!" And my husband said, "Oh, it's a great place if you can just loaf around, but if you had to work in a hot place like this, it would be like jigoku!....It's o.k. for playing, (but for contract work) it's would be hellish!" is what he said.

Q: There were Japanese doing that kind of work?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes (on contract basis like cutting sugar cane) and in a hot place like that the heavy labor it would be like 'jigoku'..... It's okay for playing but not for working! (laughter and repeat)

Q: When you arrived in San Francisco, did they travel in horse and buggy? There were no automobiles?

MRS. MORIOKA : Yes, there were no automobiles. There were trains; we traveled by train.



MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, there were no automobiles. There were trains. We traveled by train.

Q: Then how about your baggage. Did you have them sent from Japan or did you bring it all with you when you came?

MRS. MORIOKA: We didn't bring much baggage with us....uh, just a few - 4 or 5 - changes of kimono and ~~oh~~ is what I brought, but not really very much baggage...(just what we needed ).

Q: A chest and such?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, no. Nothing like that...(laughter)

Q: Then you acquired all those things after you got here?

MRS. MORIOKA: That's right. We didn't bring anything like that. Just light things we could carry....a change of clothes and things like that; chests and ( ) like that were impossible...(laughter).

MRS. MIYAKE: When we disembarked, the first thing we did was to go to a dress shop and...

MRS. MORIOKA: That's right...

MRS. MIYAKE: We changed into a dress from our kimono.

MRS. MORIOKA: We weren't allowed to wear kimonos and walk around. Nowadays you see people walking in town in kimonos, but when we first came here we couldn't wear kimonos down-town so we had to have a dress bought for us or we couldn't go outside at all! (Laughter)

Q: Oh, then, you'd wear them at home only?



MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, in the house I wore my kimono and tabi and my zorii.

MRS. MIYAKE: After I came here, I never wore kimonos at all.....

MRS. MORIOKA: Is that so?

MRS. MIYAKE: ....just my Japanese sleeping gown, never kimonos.

MRS. MORIOKA: I didn't like dresses at first, so I'd wear my kimono in the house. I'd wear my kimono and zorii (laughing)

Q: (Did you go to school in Japan separately from the boys?)

MRS. MIYAKE: It depended on the place you came from. Even in the same area, where I was raised, the boys and girls went to school separately, so we never got together with the boys....that was in Normal School (shihan gakko).

Q: Do you think it's better when you're small to be separated or that a co-educational school is better? Morioka-san, you went to a co-ed grammar school?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, co-ed.....but after I got older, I went to a girl's sewing school and that was all girls. But, what-do-you-call-it over here? - it's like the Jr. High...then, we were mixed again...co-ed, it was.

Q: Do you think that was better? That going separately was better, did you think?

MRS. MORIOKA: Let me see...I, perhaps separately is better...I have a feeling.

Q: You played together anyway, things like baseball and basket-ball?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, we didn't play. In public school in Japan, after all, we didn't have any activities together, the girls and the boys.



Q: Oh, you were completely separated?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, separate. Therefore, even if you attended together, you were all kept apart; for example, if the left half of the room was all boys, the right side was all girls...even in the same classroom. The boys were in one place and the girls in another.

Q: Oh, you didn't sit according to groups?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, we were not in groups. We were all divided, girls and boys separate, just the boys together and just the girls together. And outdoors when we played even then we didn't play with the boys. (Laughter)

Q: So it is certainly different from here.

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, it is, altogether different. Whenever we did play with the boys, we'd compete with them. When you're small, you know how you try your hardest to out-do each other! (Laughter) So it was embarrassing you see. It's not that way now in Japan; it's just like over here; they all play together. During our youth there were still very strong feudal influences. Girl-boy contacts were forbidden! (

) . Young people who weren't married and were seen, or a girl seen with a boy was considered brazen and was told she wouldn't be considered for marriage. Our parents were very.....ah.....

Q: Strict?

...very, very...My goodness! For young people to get together say on New Year's, they'd have a karuta club of 100 people or and so/at one of these clubs, we young people would get together. In between, there was no opportunity for young people



MRS. MIYAKE: Yes, they were strict.

MRS. MORIOKA: ....very, very.....my goodness! For young people to get together, say, on New Year's, they'd have a karuta club of 100 people or so and at one of these karuta clubs we young people would get together. In between, there was no opportunity for young people to get together at all.

Q: ( )

MRS. MORIOKA: No, there weren't many of those.....

Q: Karuta-kai...were held where? At a friend's home?

MRS. MORIOKA: Well, now, at a friend's home or at an acquaintance's that you liked. You'd arrange for someone to hold a karuta-kai and be invited and go. It's certainly different from nowadays!

Q: If you had a boy-friend in the neighborhood, did you play together in a neighborly way or didn't you even do that?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, we didn't. I don't know about Mrs. Miyake.

MRS. MIYAKE: We didn't play together either.

Q: Boys and girls in the neighborhood didn't associate?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, there were neighbors who were boys. Once in a while, we'd speak to each other. We'd say "good morning" in greeting or "hello", but we never played together.

Q: You never studied together?

MRS. MORIOKA: Never...never. (laughter). Sounds strange to you nisei doesn't it? Nisei or Sansei hear this and it seems to me it must be strange to you. Japan was like that in our day and age.



Feudalism was strong you know. Young people's social lives were very restricted, very strict.

Q: So therefore, then, during the arranged meeting (miai) was the first time you'd ever talk to a fellow?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, that's right.....no, (laughter)..we didn't even speak!  
 We'd take in some tea and barely look at the face. That was about it.

Q: At the o-miai?

MRS. MORIOKA: At the o-miai, yes. Oh yes, we'd never speak! PAUSE.  
 So we would be so embarrassed (bashful), we'd never even get a good look at his face and never even know what he looked like. It was like that, so his character we didn't know. After all, we'd never had any social experience - that's why there was often "trouble" later. We'd never conversed or knew how to (laughter) or anything about them! (laughter).

Q: Was there only one miai?

MRS. MORIOKA: Well, if you didn't "take" to each other, you could have any number, but...

MRS. MIYAKE: If you were going to marry that one, then just one meeting was sufficient, but if that first one didn't go well, then the girl would be spoken ill of and it would fall through. For this reason, if you consented to an o-miai, it was almost sure to go to completion.

MRS. MORIOKA: Like you'd have to...



Q: Then, did your mothers request someone to arrange a meeting?  
Did your mother speak to the fellow's mother and arrange the  
o-miai?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, not that way. There was a "go-between" (baishaku-nin),  
you see, someone to arrange. "Would your daughter like to meet  
so-and-so's son from someplace or other?", they'd ask, the bai-  
shaku-nin would ask. There was always a person who liked to do  
things like that in the community or village, so...oh, some  
relative or another person who enjoyed match-making who would  
approach and say, "your daughter is getting to be of age -  
how about so-and-so for her?". And the parents would never  
have to ask. Especially the parent of a girl. Never.

A boy's parents can come and say, "We'd like to find a  
wife for our son, but is there a nice girl somewhere?"  
Yes, a boy's family can do that, but never a girl's - not at  
all!

Q: Then you just wait?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes. (Laughter).

Q: There used to be some Nisei baishaku marriages.

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes that's so.

Q: (I don't know about now, tho') Then, did you marry within  
someone from a  
villages or/neighbor village?

MRS. MORIOKA : Let me see; usually within villages or towns or from neighbor-  
ing areas. Oh, you'd never know where you might go.

Q: How about you, Obasan? Were you and your husband from the



same village?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, we were, the same village. You see my husband came back to get me from America. My uncle had sent a letter saying, "You always wanted to go to America and there's a fellow back from America here looking for a bride to take back with him. Would you consent to a meeting? How about a miai?" He wrote such a letter and so (laughter) that's the reason I consented.

Q: He had already been in America?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, he was over here.

Q: How many years had he been here?

MRS. MORIOKA: Oh, let me see, - about four years- (pause)...so (laughter)

Q: (

MRS. MORIOKA: That's not the way it was. He went back to Japan with the purpose of finding a wife. ( ) have the meeting and if it went off well, he's get married and came to Japan with those intentions. So, (laugh), my uncle -- my then husband-to-be's cousin and his friend went to my uncle and said, "My counsin came back from America to find a wife; what about your niece?", he said to my uncle and so ....

Q: Then, Obasan, you heard from your husband all about America before you came? After all, not to get your hopes up too much?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, he said not to get too hopeful..."You, you keep saying, 'America, America' like it's a wonderful place and you're



expecting a lot. It's no place you can just play and lay around. If you go, since we're faming and I'll need you to help and there are lots and lots of chores...is that still all right with you?", he asked. (chuckle)

But no matter what he said, I wanted to go...(Laughter) I said, "All right, all right....and so I'm here, so - well (laughter).

MRS. MIYAKE: Myself, you know, I used to see magazines when I was going to (sewing school). In these magazines, America looked great. I'd see these married couples in these pictures in front of beautiful homes and it turned out they were homes of the people these couples were working for, and they'd be (

) or wealthy people's homes and they'd be nothing and be disappointed and they'd gone to America and be disillusioned and stories like that I'd see, so I didn't feel I wanted to come to America at first.

MRS. MORIOKA: Oh, is that right? If you looked at magazines like that. I never saw any magazines, (laugh) so all I wanted to do was to go to America.

MRS. MIYAKE: Young people would go over as picture brides to older fellows. They'd come over as picture brides really thinking what a beautiful, lovely place to go. The fellow would be pictured in front of the beautiful home where he worked!

MRS. MORIOKA: That was during those picture bride marriages. Uh, really there was so much trouble. The young bride's would come over



only to find some old man waiting for them - and things like that.

Q. ( )

MRS. MORIOKA: My father, in the 30th year of the Meiji Period was baptized by an American missionary. My father was a Christian, yes, but even so, the family was Buddhist. There was such opposition from his parents and he was practically disowned and disinherited, I understand. But so then, my father didn't go to church much, but when he was baptized, the papers he received from the American missionary were sent to Los Angeles, where my uncle was living. Those papers he kept and though he had nothing to will when he died, my uncles told me these papers are from God; these papers are precious. You should keep them for your father. You are inheriting this baptismal from your father. So, when we were young, there weren't many Christians.

My birthplace was Yokozawa and they'd holler, "Yaso-da, Yaso-da". So we were very much hated by the villagers. It's said they were told that when we died, we'd be put on crosses and hammered with nails, you see because they were from the country. But, after all, it does say "Be fruitful and multiply" in the Bible. Because my father became baptized in the 30th year of the Meiji Era, that conversion would be blessed and my uncle's family all were Christians and even my daughter who



could marry whomever she wanted, Buddhist or Tenrikyo or anyone she chose, I didn't intend to interfere in anyway about her religion - so after all she did marry a Christian whom she met in the church she attended. He's from Hiroshima, a Christian minister and my son, too, in Los Angeles. Her parents are in Arizona, but she's working in the service of the church and they're Christians. And my son in Sunnyvale goes to church, the Holiness Church and his children all go to Sunday School - my grandchildren - and he also serves the church. After all, this too must all be due to the Lord's will. (Laughter). That was the 30th year of the Meiji Period, the year the American missionary baptized my father.

BEGIN SIDE I TAPE 2 (small reel)

(to America)  
 MRS. MORIOKA: But since we've come here/and lived in the country, we never  
 (Continues) attended church. Only after the war is it that we started to come here (to Parkview)

MRS. MIYAKE: You probably don't understand her reference to the 30th year of the Meiji Period, do you young people...? Meiji 33-nen is the year 1900, so Meiji 30-nen is 1897. I was born in Meiji 33-nen which is 1900, so that was three years before - 1897.

MRS. MORIOKA: Oh...

MRS. MIYAKE: Our family was Buddhist, but really, we helped take care of the temples and shrines and I myself didn't think about religion too much. At school, religion seemed more like a superstition



to me. So when I was in Normal School, the teacher said to write about your religious beliefs. So I said, "while my family is a Buddhist family, I am not yet ready to choose which religion to follow." I was so impertinent! I had the feeling there was something or someone greater or above myself to believe in, and I would think about it and that conviction was there, but at the time I wrote that there is no God, I was young and hasty. At one time, I went to a school, the principal was a Christian and instead of using the Japanese text, he used to read stories out of the Bible and taught us. So therefore, at that point, I had leanings toward Christianity, but as Mrs. Morioka says, people in our village used to call the Christians there, "Y<sub>a</sub>so-masa", or "Yasoberu, Yozomasa-san". It was that way then, so I didn't want to become a Christian. Then, when I was returning to America a second time I was together with Kiki Ryugo's sister. She had gone to Japan and was returning and we came here and bought a house on S Street, between 5th & 6th Streets. Masako-san (Ryugo) said, "It's just as though we came here to America from Japan as a yōshi (bride), so it is only right that because America is a Christian country, that we should adopt its religion is the way I look at it. So, even if we're from a Buddhist country, I'm going to Sunday School." that's what she said to me and Masako-san introduced me to the church.



So, my children came regularly to this Sunday School. Masako taught Sunday School here, too, until she went to San Jose State College....before Paul Mayeda came...and Helen Mayeda was the pianist for a short time. So I sent the children, but I didn't come myself at all. And then I was thinking 'before I die, sometime I must be baptized' and I was saying something like "...when I go back to Japan..." and then I had to have an operation, so I called Reverend Kato and told him I wanted to be baptized and he said, "Miyake-san, didn't you say you want to be baptized when you go back to Japan? and I said, "I'm getting things in order, just in case"....and he said, "That's not for dying, it's for beginning to live and I said, "Dying or living...." And he said, "It doesn't matter - it's a wonderful decision whichever way!" So, I was baptized and even now Rev. Kato will say, "Miyake-san, you were preparing for dying and you prepared for living!" ...and it's really true. Living, dying it's all the same in the end. At first, my doubts were because I thought we had to live the Bible just the way it's written and I knew I couldn't do that. So if I had to I couldn't, I thought, and then, I decided if I didn't try it might be too late and so....(Laughter).

MRS. MORIOKA: Were you baptized after I was?

MRS. MIYAKE: It was after.



MRS. MORIOKA: I was baptized by Rev. Kato too.

Q: Where was the church located when you first came here?

MRS. MIYAKE: The church was at 5th and M.

Q: Oh, 5th and M? Christian Church?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, ( )

Q: ( )

MRS. MORIOKA: Then before the war in 1941, this church was built. (referring to Parkview).

Q: When you came from Japan, there wasn't a church for you to go to?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, there was.

Q: In Oregon, too?

MRS. MIYAKE: Yes, there was in Oregon. There was a Methodist Church.

#### SILENT INTERVAL

MRS. MORIOKA: On New Year's, there's a New Year Religious Service, what is called a "Shihohai" in Japan. They decorate pine, plum and bamboo in a wreath and stand it in front of the house and put a knotted sacred rice straw festoon....I don't know if you understand - they use rice straw, make it into a rope - and they put offerings, rice....and they put it over the entry-way.

Q: What was the meaning of this? Was it for blessings for the coming year?



MRS. MORIOKA: Something like that. For luck for the year. The matsu is green forever; plums fend off the cold and symbolize the blooming of flowers and the bamboo which is fibrous and tough and does not break...that kind of symbol; that's what they decorated.

Q: Where did you decorate it?

MRS. MORIOKA: In our area, we'd put the pine, plum and bamboo together and then we'd stand it in front of the house and then the rope wreath we'd put in front over the door at the entry. The homes were different from those here you see.

Q: You ~~have~~ a visiting custom. If everyone went visiting or calling, who stayed home? If everyone went calling, then there was no one to watch the house.

MRS. MORIOKA: No, not everyone went visiting. We'd always go to the school-teacher's homes on New Year's.

Q: In the morning or the afternoon?

MRS. MORIOKA: Not necessarily. During the day and then if they weren't home, we'd leave our calling card. All day the others would not be there to greet guests all day; it's too troublesome, so they'd leave a tray on the porch for the calling cards. Some would come out to greet you, too.

Q: Adults did that too?

MRS. MIYAKE: Yes, the adults would walk, but not the women; they'd stay home

MRS. MORIOKA: The men would go out.



Q: The men would go and the women would stay home? in case of company?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, yes, not strictly, but not over here. Years ago when we first came here at New Year's we'd go visiting among friends, drink sake and make special dishes, but not in Japan, they didn't do that!

Q: Oh, then, that was American style?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, that was American style. Anyway, people who knew each other well or relatives would do that where I came from. But with the average person we wouldn't. We'd just greet each other and say "omedeto" and that was it.

Q: The ~~sushi~~ and all that you didn't make?

MRS. MORIOKA: No, we didn't do that. Not in Japan.

MRS. MIYAKE: You didn't? Where I came from we did. O-nishime and...

MRS. MORIOKA: For eating at home we did, but we didn't make it especially for company.

MRS. MIYAKE: When they'd drop in for greeting. Recently, my niece, for Appreciation Day from the firm where her husband works, the boss brought all the food and goodies for New Year's and they drank (rice wine) sake all day and eat and then the next day they played golf and turned away customers! While he's working for this company they decorate the house and really treat them royally and they were so busy, she wrote. Whereas, we were brought up in the country so we didn't have company like that. But the custom is that we're not supposed to cook for three days during the



New Year, so all the preparation was made ahead and we'd do just a little cooking, o-zōni and such. But at New Year's we'd take it easy and we'd decorate the whole inside of the house with the sacred wreaths and have offerings to the gods and especially dried persimmons....

MRS. MORIOKA: .....yes, dried persimmons and chestnuts and the like. One of Japan's superstitions you see...persimmons (hoshi-gaki)... chestnuts, (kaki-kuri)...names like that

Q: You'd eat them, decorate them?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, eat and decorate. Like black beans (kuromame -mame de kurasu yo ni : to live a long, healthy life) and shrimp, you'd use, so you'd live until your back bent like a shrimp and also for good luck.

MRS. MIYAKE: ...and konbu - yorokobu, to be happy. Yes, they use konbu (sea-weed) for yorokobi.

MRS. MORIOKA: Then, in March there's the Girl's Festival, for parents to honor their daughters. Girl's day it is and for boys, they have the "Koi-nobori". The carp leaps high waterfalls; the carp is a powerful fish and so, for the boys to grow to be mighty like the carp, they raise these paper carp. And then, in July, there's a Tanabata festival. How can we explain it best? Tanabata Festival?

MRS. MIYAKE: It's a ceremonial festival.

MRS. MORIOKA: That is, neh, The female god and the male god can meet in the Milky Way once a year on July 7th. We put bamboo poles up and hang poems and pictures on certain colored papers....



...pretty gold and white...called goshiki-no-kami (5 inches square; then we'd stand the tree up ( ) and have a rope ( ) and decorate it with eggplants and cucumbers and summer vegetables. It was really something to look forward to!

Q: Where did you decorate them? In your room?

MRS. MORIOKA: Not inside, outside. Out in the corner of the garden.

Q: Was this done from house to house?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, from house to house. Each family would cut its own bamboo tree. It was lots of fun! .....and then there's the O-bon, you know. July 15, it starts - or was it the 13th? 13th. Three days it lasts. When the moon is full, they light lovely, white paper lanterns and they have floral and paper tributes everywhere. Are you familiar with this or are you not? It's beautiful; lots of small lanterns hanging and we'd have all the relatives come and pay homage to the graves. That is Buddhist, of course; that was a kind of tanoshimi, too.

Q: That is followed by the Bon-Odori?

A. Yes.

Q: After the O-bon, from August to September, what other festivals are there?

MRS. MIYAKE: Let's see, when it gets to be October, there are festivals of



the patron deities. (Ujigami)

Q: What kind of a god is the Ujigami?

MRS. MIYAKE: Uji means your family name. When you are born, you go to the temple to ask the god to watch over you, when you are from one to three months old, so that you can be a protege (ujiko) of the patron deity. Generally, in each Japanese village or town, a god is enshrined and belongs to that village, such as Hachimansama or Tenjinsama.

Q: Then are there Shinto Gods in the shrines?

MRS. MIYAKE: Yes, yes, Japan doesn't have any one religion. Buddhist and Shinto, it's all mixed.....Buddhists go to the shrines to Hachiman-san the same way.

MRS. MORIOKA: Mostly, the funerals are Buddhist. When children are born they belong to a Shinto God....that kind of rationale.

Q: Then, after that in November, are there anymore special occasions?

BOTH LADIES: There aren't, really.

MRS. MORIOKA: Besides New Year's, there's O-bon and then, the village Ujigamisan Festival...that's about it.

MRS. MIYAKE: In November, there's the "Shichigosan Festival". When you are three, five or seven years old, you get dressed in your best clothes and go to the shrine, the boys to theirs and the girls to theirs.

Q: Is there a Moon Festival, some special observance?

BOTH LADIES: No, there's none. Not a special festival.



Q: You have decorations and observances?

A: Yes, in the Fall. It's not a festival. You gaze at the moon because it's beautiful and full around the 15th. It's so lovely to look at you make some boiled rice dumplings and pay homage to the moon.

Q: In the spring you have the flower-viewing and everybody goes out...

MRS. MIYAKE: Especially nowadays, when the cherry blossoms are in full bloom, there are many viewers.

Q: Do they go to the parks or to the mountains?

MRS. MORIOKA: Naturally, they go where they are blooming profusely. To Ushinoyama, where there are many cherry trees, for instance.

Q: Do they go on trips?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, on trips.

Q: How about the summertime? Is there something?

MRS. MORIOKA: In the summer, many people do go, yes, to the sea. It's so hot. In Japan, the waters are warm, you see. Here, it's cold and the wind blows so. In Japan the beaches are very warm, so they make good harbors. Here and there, at Enoshima and places like that, they report thousands of visitors in the newspaper. Unbelievable numbers of people go there!

Q: Then, in the winter, there's just New Year's, I guess.

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, well, among the young there are many who go skiing now. In our day, there weren't many who went. Now, sports are very



popular and there are a lot of them who can ski. It's a lot like this country over there now.

Q: In those days, there weren't many sports. What kind of things did you do for fun that you can remember?

MRS. MORIOKA: So-desu-ne. There wasn't anything much in the way of games.

(Laughter).

MRS. MIYAKE: With a ball or hand-ball, that was about it. At New Year's, there was the shuttlecock and battledore.

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, yes, at New Year's, there was the battledore and shuttlecock, called the 'hago-ita'; we'd go "kon-kon" and hit the shuttlecock.

In our day, there wasn't much for us to play with, was there?

Q: How about the boys?

MRS. MORIOKA: The boys, too. Not much either, not the way sports are popular today...That's the kind of era we were born into.

Q: What time did you start school, about 8 o'clock in the morning?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, between 8 and 8:30.

Q: Did you take a lunch?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, we took a lunch.

Q: Did you eat at your own desk?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, at our own desk.

Q: Did the teacher stay in one room or change seats or rooms?

MRS. MIYAKE: After primary school, you had your own desk and stayed there,



studied history and geography in the one room.

MRS. MORIOKA: We did not change...the 5th grade room. Your room was assigned and you ate lunch in your classroom with the teacher and when you finished lunch the teacher would tell us an interesting story of some kind. Was it that way with you, Mrs. Miyake? That's the way it was with us.

Q: When school was over and you returned home, did you study some more?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, well (laughter).....we didn't do much studying. (laughter)

MRS. MIYAKE: Now, we didn't study the way they do now. Only when there were exams, - at night. I had so many brothers and sisters, when I got home and I was the eldest, so I had to watch the little ones.

MRS. MORIOKA: We'd study for tests, but school wasn't that important.

Q: Then, housework and helping mother was more important.

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, that's right - cooking and cleaning and helping, etc.

Q: Did your mothers do the shopping?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, the mother goes to the store.

Q: Stores in Japan are different from over here, aren't they?

MRS. MORIOKA: Yes, they're different.

Q: There are no department stores or supermarkets, are there?

BOTH LADIES: There are now, a lot of them!

MRS. MORIOKA: But when we were young, there were no such things. There were zakka-ten (small shops).

MRS. MIYAKE: ....like the specialty shops over here.

MRS. MORIOKA: ...groceries, no big department stores. Now, there are, even in cities of fair size, big department stores. Since the war, Japan has changed tremendously!

END